

both in U.S. and international competition. She is the former world record holder and world champion in the 200m backstroke. She was the silver medalist in the 200m backstroke at both the 2003 and 2005 World Championships, and she won her first U.S. national title in the 200m backstroke at the 2005 World Championship Trials.

In addition to her many accomplishments in the sport of swimming, her activities outside the pool truly distinguish Margaret Hoelzer as a champion. When she's not swimming, Ms. Hoelzer is a mentor and role model to the young people who take part in her youth swim clinics. As a motivational speaker, she takes her "if you put your mind to it, anything is possible" message of perseverance to countless children in her community. In addition, Ms. Hoelzer volunteers at the National Children's Advocacy Center in Huntsville, where she works with abused children. Upon completion of her master's degree in sociology at Auburn University, she hopes to continue her work with abused children as a psychologist.

On Thursday, September 4, 2008, Ms. Hoelzer was honored with a reception in her hometown of Huntsville, Alabama. There Ms. Hoelzer's family, friends, and community celebrated her accomplishments and contributions to the sport of swimming. I rise to join them in their tribute and to thank Ms. Hoelzer for her service to our community.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4040, CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the Conference Report for H.R. 4040, the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act.

Over the last year we have read distressing reports in the newspapers of tainted pet food, toothpaste, and other products from China. These are troubling revelations, made even more disconcerting by the reports of lead tainted toys; lead is a substance which can stunt the mental and physical development of children. Toys are meant to entertain, educate, and inspire the imagination. It is greatly unsettling that some toys are not safe. In fact, some toys can seriously injure children and cause sickness. Last year, products like Barbie accessories, Thomas the Tank Engines, toy magnets, and jewelry were recalled after it was found that some of these products contained up to 200 times the legal amount of lead. Over 45 million toys and children's products were recalled in 2007 due to their danger to the health of our Nation's children. Disturbingly, the number of recalled products continues to increase. In fact, this year the number of recalls of toys and children's products is up 29 percent over the first half of 2007.

The events of the past year have demonstrated the danger that American consumers face when the government does not give regulatory agencies the tools they need in order to protect consumers from unsafe products. During this time of record product recalls, the Consumer Product Safety Commission

(CPSC), the Government agency responsible for monitoring and enforcing product safety, has been starved for resources. Since 2004, the CPSC has lost 15 percent of its workforce and now 420 people are responsible for overseeing over 15,000 types of consumer goods. This means that a single person is responsible for testing all toys at the CPSC. Leadership at the highest levels of the CPSC has been asleep at the switch and has shown little interest in addressing the serious threat that tainted toys pose to our Nation's children. This is a disservice to American children and their families, and I am pleased that we are finally taking up legislation that would help to give the CPSC the tools that it needs to keep our children and families safe.

The conference report for H.R. 4040 would help empower the CPSC to become a more effective force for regulating the consumer marketplace by increasing its budget and regulatory authority. It would protect our children by requiring the pre-market testing in certified laboratories of children's products for lead and other harmful chemicals. H.R. 4040 would ban even trace amounts of lead in any product intended for children under the age of 12, and prohibit phthalates in children's products. Phthalates are known to cause reproductive and developmental harm. This legislation would also make it easier to recall tainted products by requiring manufacturers to place distinguishing marks on products and packages. It would provide whistleblower protections for private sector employees regarding alleged violations of any CPSC-enforced product safety requirements. Finally, this bill would establish better means of communicating to consumers and States when products are recalled.

I am proud to support the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act, and I urge my colleagues to support the Conference Report.

HONORING RICHARD GRIFFIN

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 8, 2008

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of longtime Richmond City Councilmember Richard Griffin. A tireless public servant and proud resident of the East Bay, Mr. Griffin passed away Wednesday, August 13, 2008. He was 74 years old.

Richard Griffin was born in 1934. He lived in the city of Richmond for 37 years, and served in the United States Armed Forces. Mr. Griffin served as a public school teacher and principal in Oakland before embarking on a formal political career. As an educator, he was an active union member in the United Administrators of Oakland Schools, Local 83.

Richard was a strong believer in the importance of good mentors for our young people, and an unwavering advocate for the right to a quality education for all. Richard was an excellent role model for our youth, especially African-Americans. He never tired of working to level the playing field so that the bright, young, talented students whom he taught would have the best opportunities to pursue fulfilling and successful lives.

Mr. Griffin held degrees in both chemistry and biology from San Francisco State

University. He later earned a master's degree in Education. In addition to teaching, his career included diverse experiences, such as working as a microbiologist for Schlitz Brewery and as chief chemist for General Dynamics Corporation. An expert in his field, Richard was awarded three National Science Foundation Scholarships.

He later went on to spend more than two decades tirelessly serving the residents of Richmond as an esteemed member of their city council. He was appointed to his position on the city council in 1981 to fill a vacancy. His last term ended in 2006, when he decided not to seek re-election. During his tenure on the city council, he also served as vice-mayor.

His colleagues on the Richmond City Council remember him as extremely affable, charismatic, and passionate about the needs of the constituency he represented. Residents and city employees have described him as one of the most accessible elected officials, always available to listen and reach out to residents and city agencies and interested in addressing complex issues in a hands-on and collaborative fashion.

Mr. Griffin was widely known as a champion for the rights of senior citizens and was a strong advocate of redevelopment projects which would improve access for those with special mobility needs. He was also keenly involved in the development of Richmond's crime-prevention programs. Richard understood, however, that being "tough on crime" was not enough. He aimed, instead, to protect the populace and encourage the healthy development of city neighborhoods. During the early 1980s, his support helped firmly establish the police commission, which investigates allegations of police brutality and works to ensure that every person, even those who have been accused of committing a crime, are treated humanely and with dignity.

A man of faith, Richard was a dedicated member of St. John's Missionary Baptist Church. He always made time for community service and, in addition to contributing to the good work of his church, also served as the director of both the Richmond Girls Club and the Greater Richmond Social Service Corporation, respectively.

Richard was a man of great wisdom. He provided tremendous support to me when I ran for the State Senate in 1996. I am deeply grateful for his counsel, his assistance, and his friendship.

Today, California's 9th Congressional District salutes and honors Mr. Richard Griffin. Our deepest condolences go out to his loving wife, two sons, three grandchildren, and many friends and colleagues. We thank his family for sharing this exuberant and compassionate spirit with us. May his soul rest in peace.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATION OF DENNIS M. BARRY

HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 8, 2008

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Dennis M. Barry, as he retires as the Interim Director of Contra Costa County's Department of Conservation and Development, after 30 years of service.